

# **Senate Finance committee testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Anita Bass

Position: FAV

Testimony by Kim Modeski BCPL Circulation Manager

To the Senate Finance committee. My name is Kim Modeski and I am a Circulation Manager at Baltimore County Public Library. I would like to thank you for considering this legislation.

In 2022 non-supervisory staff at Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) were successful in forming a union to collectively bargain on their behalf. However, this did not include manager/supervisor units to be formed in Baltimore. Last year, the Library Workers Empowerment Act did not extend collective bargaining rights to Baltimore management/supervisors because BCPL was an “unorganized” library system. This bill, SB914, will provide the rights that other counties in Maryland already possess. This bill will not alter the unionizing and collective bargaining processes established in BCPL’s 2021 law. Essentially, this bill enables rights for managers/supervisors and staff but will not disrupt a process that has proven to work. I feel that providing managers/supervisors inclusion in this unit is essential to protect our right to collectively bargain.

I would ask that my colleagues and I receive the opportunity to unionize to protect our working conditions and assist in negotiating wages. Communication and transparency have long been overlooked by administration but are a crucial element for our success. I ask that you consider allowing managers/supervisors the ability to join our nonsupervisory staff in ensuring a safe and fair environment in which to work.

Thank you for a favorable report on SB914.

**To the Senate Finance committee. Thank you for all**

Uploaded by: Anita Bass

Position: FAV

To the Senate Finance committee, Senator Hettleman. Thank you for allowing me to speak on SB914. My name is Anita Bass and I am the local president for the IAM Machinist Local 4538 which Baltimore County Public Library workers are part of and I also work at the Essex Library branch in the circulation department.

I am here in support of SB 914 because it will enable Baltimore County Public Library supervisors and managers if they so choose to unionize. When the Library Workers Empowerment Act was passed Baltimore County Public Library workers were not part of that bill because we already had our law and our union. Since the Library Workers Empowerment Act (LWEA) became law BCPL library managers & supervisors are now requesting that they are included. Supervisors and managers should have the same rights to unionize as non-supervisory staff. Supervisors still have concerns with working conditions and wages.

Another concern that non-supervisory staff have is that when they are promoted to a supervisory position they are promoted out of the union and they lose that protection of the union. SB914 would keep that protection for them. All managers and supervisors on the mid-level are eligible because their job descriptions are aligned with the supervisory job descriptions which fits the same language that is in SB914.

BCPL managers/supervisors are not involved in negotiations and are not considered confidential employees under the library workers empowerment act. So, that would not exclude them from being part of SB914. Staff members who can be in the union that are part of the supervisory unit the LWEA law defines supervisors as employees with the authority to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward or discipline employees. They can also address and resolve employee grievances. That is what the library workers empowerment act states and that is why the BCPL Library managers and supervisors would like to be able to choose to unionize. This does not make them Union, this is only to give them a choice.

I'd like to thank you for your support for SB914 and thank you for giving me the time to speak.

## **Supervisor testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Bridget Fitzgerald

Position: FAV

Testimony from Bridget Fitzgerald  
To Baltimore County Delegation  
Regarding HB 1071  
Baltimore County Delegation Hearing February 21, 2025

Greetings members of the Baltimore County Delegation, My name is Bridget Fitzgerald. I am an organizer with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). I would like to thank you for considering this legislation and extend special appreciation to Delegate Cathi Forbes and Senator Shelly Hettleman, both of whom have stood by Baltimore County library workers since their first step down this path.

In 2021, this delegation supported enabling legislation for the non-supervisory staff of the Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) to form a union and collectively bargain, should that have been something they chose to do. Later that year, BCPL non-supervisory staff did in fact organize and vote in the IAM as their representative for collective bargaining.

Since then, other collective bargaining legislation has passed including the State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Supervisory Employees legislation, Maryland Public Employee Relations Act and the Library Workers Empowerment Act (LWEA), to name a few. Whether the intent was to streamline the process, provide better coordination across the public sector or enable segments of Maryland’s public sector employees to unionize, each law signals an expansion of collective bargaining rights for public sector employees in the state of Maryland.

The LWEA was a comprehensive piece of legislation that helped unorganized library systems in Maryland. It enabled both non-supervisory and supervisory employees to unionize into two separate units. However, LWEA did not step back and provide for supervisory units to be formed in Baltimore, because BCPL was not an “unorganized” library system. This bill, HB1071, will provide the enabling rights to supervisors, matching the other counties in Maryland, **without** altering the unionizing and collective bargaining processes established in BCPL’s 2021 law. Essentially, this is the best of both worlds – provides enabling rights to employees without disrupting to a process that has proven to work for management and staff alike.

I understand that some who operate outside the union representation world may not understand the need for two units or comprehend how they can exist side-by-side. The separation by unit is intended to avoid conflicts-of-interest, while respecting the workers’ rights to organize with a union of their choosing. Unit representatives, commonly known as Stewards, are elected from within the unit to represent **only** those in the described unit. This provides represented employees with a steward who understands the contract and the workplace on a similar level (non-supervisory level or supervisory level). To be more precise, only non-supervisory stewards would represent non-supervisory employees and only supervisory stewards would represent supervisory employees. This scenario applies whether the individual units are represented by the same union, or different ones, as the choice of union is up to the employees in the unit.

There are examples of this multi-unit relationship existing throughout the Labor world. In the Federal Sector, the units are referred to as professionals and non-professionals. The two units are just as likely to be represented by the same union, as not, even in the same agency. For example, within the US Forest Service, the IAM represents professionals working on some forests, non-professionals on others, and some forests where we represent both units. Similar situations exist here in the state of Maryland, within the public sector. For example, within the education system, Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) has Administrative and Supervisory units (A&S). On January 29, 2025, MSEA announced they were welcoming their tenth A&S unit to their organization. Similar situations exist within American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). They are organizing supervisors into "S-Units" within various areas of the public sector.

Finally, the dual unit scenario has long existed within the PG County library system. These library system employees have been unionized since the 1980's, so they were also excluded from LWEA. If you examine the contract between the PG library system and McGeo Union, you will find they have two units identified in their contract. Based on the job classifications listed, the units are divided by supervisory and non-supervisory status.

In Baltimore, the non-supervisory employees have unionized to negotiate their wages, hours and working conditions. The labor-management cooperative relationship has provided better communication and transparency. Providing a pathway for the supervisory employees in BCPL to achieve the same will be beneficial for the employees and the public who utilize the library's services. For this reason, I request you vote favorable on HB107.

Thank you.

# **SEIU Local 500 Testimony in Support of SB 914.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christopher Cano

Position: FAV





Testimony - SB 914, Baltimore County Public Library – Collective Bargaining –  
Supervisory Employees  
Favorable  
Senate Finance Committee  
February 27, 2025  
Christopher C. Cano, MPA  
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairwoman Beidle and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

SEIU Local 500, as one of Maryland's largest public sector unions representing over 23,000 workers, expresses our strong support for Senate Bill 914 which provides supervisory employees at Baltimore County Public Libraries collective bargaining rights. This legislation is a necessary step toward ensuring fairness, workplace democracy, and equitable treatment for dedicated library professionals who play a crucial role in serving our communities.

Public libraries are essential institutions that provide access to knowledge, resources, and opportunities for lifelong learning. Supervisory employees within BCPL are integral to this mission, as they not only manage daily operations but also mentor staff, implement policies, and contribute to the overall success of library services. Despite their vital responsibilities, these employees currently lack the ability to collectively negotiate for better working conditions, fair compensation, and job security. SB 914 corrects this imbalance by allowing them to form and join bargaining units, ensuring their voices are heard in workplace decisions.

Collective bargaining rights foster a collaborative and transparent work environment, leading to improved morale and efficiency. Across Maryland and the nation, institutions that allow supervisory employees to unionize have seen benefits such as reduced turnover, stronger professional development opportunities, and more effective service delivery. By passing SB 914, Maryland would affirm its commitment to equitable labor practices and recognize the valuable contributions of library supervisors.

This bill does not seek to disrupt existing bargaining units or agreements but rather to expand rights in a fair and measured way. The establishment of a separate bargaining unit for supervisory employees, as outlined in the legislation, ensures a balanced approach that respects both management and labor interests.

We urge the committee to support SB 914 and advance the rights of Baltimore County Public Library supervisory employees. Their dedication to public service deserves the protections and benefits that collective bargaining provides. We thank Senator Hettleman for her leadership on this issue and ask you to provide a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration

Christopher C. Cano, MPA  
Director of Political & Legislative Affairs  
SEIU Local 500

# **SB 914 testimony - FAVORABLE - Heather Faust.pdf**

Uploaded by: Heather Faust

Position: FAV

Dear members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to consider SB 914, Baltimore County Public Library – Collective Bargaining – Supervisory Employees. And thank you to Senator Hettleman for sponsoring this important legislation.

My name is Heather Faust, and I'm a Library Supervisor with Baltimore County Public Library. When legislation was passed in 2021 initially permitting non-supervisory Baltimore County Public Library employees to unionize, I was still a non-supervisory employee. I was proud and excited to join the new BCPL union, and I even volunteered to serve as a steward at the Lansdowne Branch where I have worked since 2017.

When the opportunity for promotion to my current position suddenly presented itself in the summer of 2022, the biggest drawback I felt, and something that almost caused me not to apply for the position, was that if I were to be promoted to Library Supervisor I would have to leave the union. I thought long and hard about this before deciding to apply, eventually concluding that, for me, management and unions are not mutually exclusive, and that being a manager who understands how unions work and recognizes their benefit could only be a good thing.

You may hear those opposed to this legislation claim that extending collective bargaining rights to managers and supervisors at BCPL is unprecedented and will lead to catastrophe. They may say something like, "If we extend bargaining rights to library managers and supervisors in Baltimore County then everyone else will want those same rights, and it will be unsupportable."

On the contrary, many other managers and supervisors both in Baltimore County and throughout the state of Maryland already have such collective bargaining rights! I included a few supporting links below that I found in only a very quick and cursory search online. For example:

- Just last spring, Governor Moore signed not only HB 609/SB 591, the Library Workers Empowerment Act, which included collective bargaining rights for supervisory employees of all other Maryland public library systems currently without a union, but also HB 260/SB 192, which allowed over 5,000 supervisors working for the state of Maryland to collectively bargain.<sup>1</sup> Those state supervisors now have their own supervisory unit within the Maryland Classified Employees Association (MCEA)<sup>2</sup>
- Since 1994 Baltimore County Public Schools have had the Council of Administrative & Supervisory Employees (CASE) as their designated bargaining unit for those supervisory personnel whose job requires them to be state certified.<sup>3</sup>
- In addition, the BCPS Organization of Professional Employees (BCPSOPE) represents professional, technical, and supervisory positions that do not require state certification.<sup>4</sup>
- Both the Baltimore City and Baltimore County Police Departments include employees up through the rank of Lieutenant in their collective bargaining units.<sup>5</sup>
- Prince George's County Library has had both non-supervisory and supervisory units in their union for many years.

In other words, this is certainly not a new concept and many examples of successful, clearly and appropriately structured collective bargaining by managers and supervisors already exist in Maryland. The fact that SB 914

provides for two separate bargaining units removes the issue of conflict of interest, and with the two units I expect the roles and responsibilities of each will be defined even more clearly than they are now.

When I listened to opposing testimony on SB 914's sister bill, HB 1071, I was particularly struck by the repeated comments about how closely BCPL administration and the BCPL union have worked together to successfully negotiate four contracts. I realized again just how much managers and supervisors like me who are **not** "confidential employees,"<sup>6</sup> and who do **not** take part in setting library policy, are left out of that process under the current system.

The current view seems to be that as a supervisor my viewpoint must necessarily be aligned more with the institution than with the staff I supervise or even with my fellow supervisors. Yet as a supervisor on the branch level, not only am I not part of the negotiation process, I cannot even talk to anyone **about** the process. I have no outlet to ask any questions about what's being negotiated, offer my support (or opposition) at any point in the process, or give any input about how any part of the negotiations might affect my staff or my branch, let alone my own workload or experience as a supervisor.

This is very isolating. And unfortunately, especially for those managers and supervisors who were not previously familiar with unions, the current structure that excludes us from the collective bargaining process seems to have created an unnecessary estrangement between managers and staff by drawing an artificial – but very visible – "us vs them" line between us.

In fact, managers and supervisors at BCPL often have much in common with the staff we supervise. We face many of the same challenges and concerns, we share many of the same goals, and we too deserve a process whereby we can advocate for improvements to our own working conditions as well as those of our staff, conditions which are really interrelated. This legislation clearly spells out the roles and expectations of the two bargaining units (supervisory and non-supervisory), assisting in clearer communication and an improved working relationship between all parties.

SB 914 brings BCPL's collective bargaining structure in line with last year's Library Workers Empowerment Act, and indeed with all the other library systems in Maryland, while retaining all the processes of the 2021 BCPL law. The legislation has been carefully crafted to remove the possibility of conflict of interest, in keeping with other supervisory collective bargaining units already in existence throughout the state.

I hope you will support SB 914 and encourage your colleagues to do likewise, and I thank you again for your time and consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://afscmemd.org/press-room/gov-moore-signs-bill-giving-5000-state-supervisors-ability>

<sup>2</sup> <https://mcea-su.md.aft.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://case-bcps.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://bcpsope.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://fop3.org/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://koffassociates.com/news-and-notes/confidential-employee-designation/>

## **SB914\_Hettleman\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Shelly Hettleman

Position: FAV

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TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN  
SB 914 - BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY – COLLECTIVE BARGAINING –  
SUPERVISORY EMPLOYEES

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, I am writing to express my strong support for **SB 914 Baltimore County Public Library – Collective Bargaining – Supervisory Employees**.

Maryland has previously recognized the importance of collective bargaining by granting non-supervisory employees of the Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) the right to organize and negotiate fair working conditions. Prior legislation ensured that library staff had a voice in shaping their workplace policies, leading to greater job stability and improved services for the community. In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 45, authorizing non-supervisory staff of the BCPL to form a union and collectively bargain, should they choose to do so. Later that year, the staff successfully formed a union and negotiated collective bargaining agreements.

In 2024, the Library Workers Empowerment Act (LWEA), was enacted. This legislation extended collective bargaining rights across the state of Maryland. However, it excluded BCPL as it already had established a collective bargaining framework. Notably, LWEA allows for two bargaining units for those included in the legislation – one for employees, and one for supervisory employees. Therefore, with its exclusion from the LWEA legislation in 2024, BCPL lacks the same rights afforded to their counterparts across the state. SB 914 seeks to extend these rights to BCPL supervisory employees, acknowledging their critical role in library operations and the need for equitable representation.

The absence of collective bargaining rights for the supervisory employees of BCPL poses several concerns. First, when unionized non-supervisor employees are promoted to supervisory roles, they face the option of forfeiting their union status or denying the promotion offer in order to retain their representation. Additionally, with the absence of these rights, supervisors may be subject to limited workplace resources, stagnant wages, and benefit disparities.

It is important to recognize that there are plenty of examples in Maryland where separate bargaining units of supervisory and non-supervisory employees share the same union affiliation. For example, Maryland State Education Association, MSEA, has local affiliates throughout the state that represent supervisory and nonsupervisory employees within the same school district in Allegany County, Carroll County, Dorchester County, Frederick County, Garrett County, and St. Mary's County. This clearly demonstrates that separate bargaining units can exist successfully under the same union while maintaining clear distinctions to prevent conflicts of interest. The separation by unit enables supervisors to advocate for their interests in their own collective bargaining unit.

SB 914 promotes equitable treatment by granting supervisory employees the same rights to collective bargaining as other staff members, ensuring all voices are heard in organizational decisions. It allows for unionized employees to retain their union status should they be promoted from a non-supervisory to a supervisory role. The bill also includes provisions to delineate management and supervisory roles clearly, ensuring that those with hiring or firing authority remain classified to prevent conflicts.

It is paramount that Maryland takes the necessary steps to ensure that all employees have essential rights in the workplace. We must make certain that supervisors, like their non-supervisory counterparts, are empowered in the workplace to advocate for themselves and remain committed to leadership and organizational performance. In order to do so, we must extend the collective bargaining rights that are available across Maryland to BCPL supervisors. SB 914 will do just that. Therefore, I urge a favorable report from the committee.